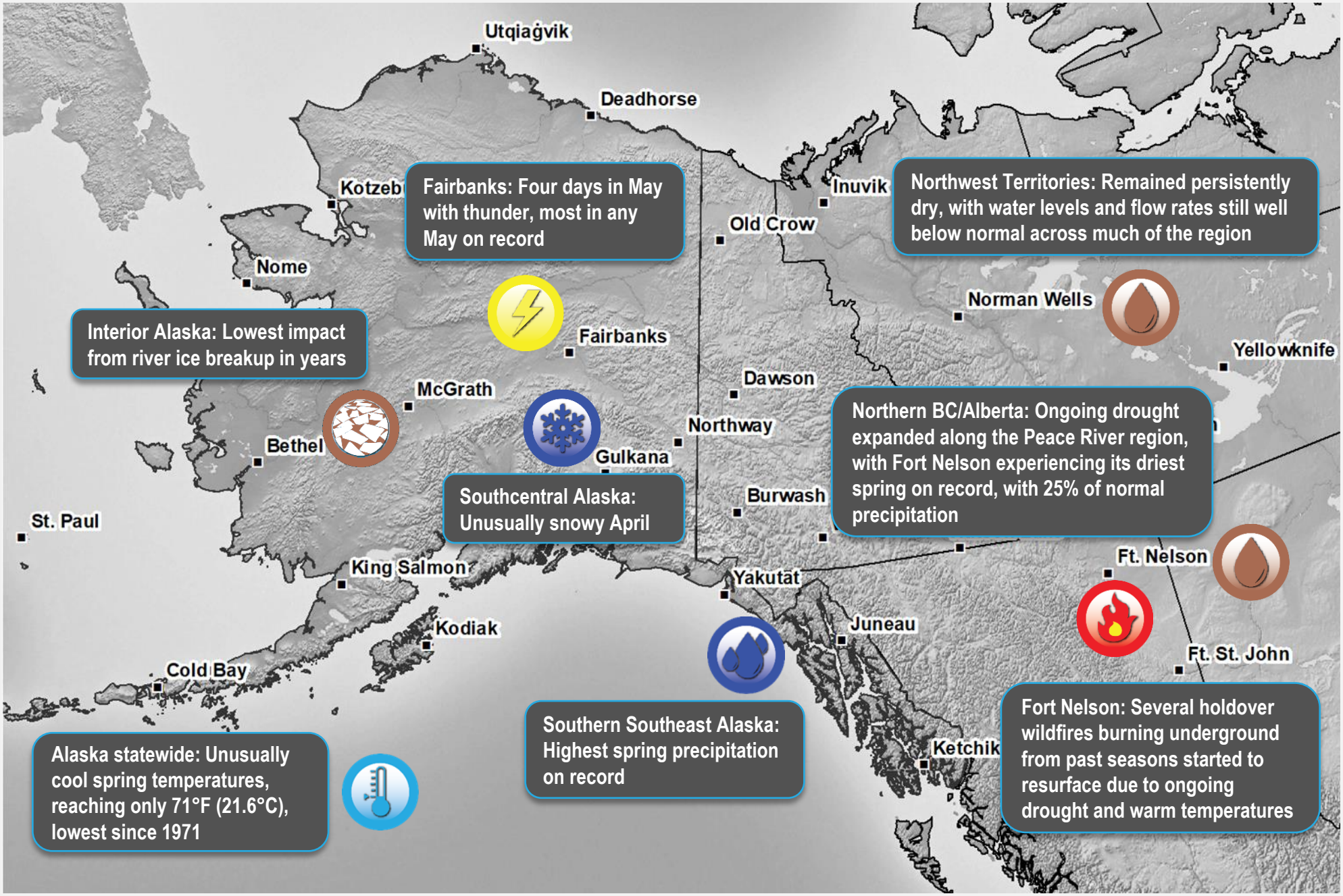
ALASKA and NORTHWESTERN CANADA

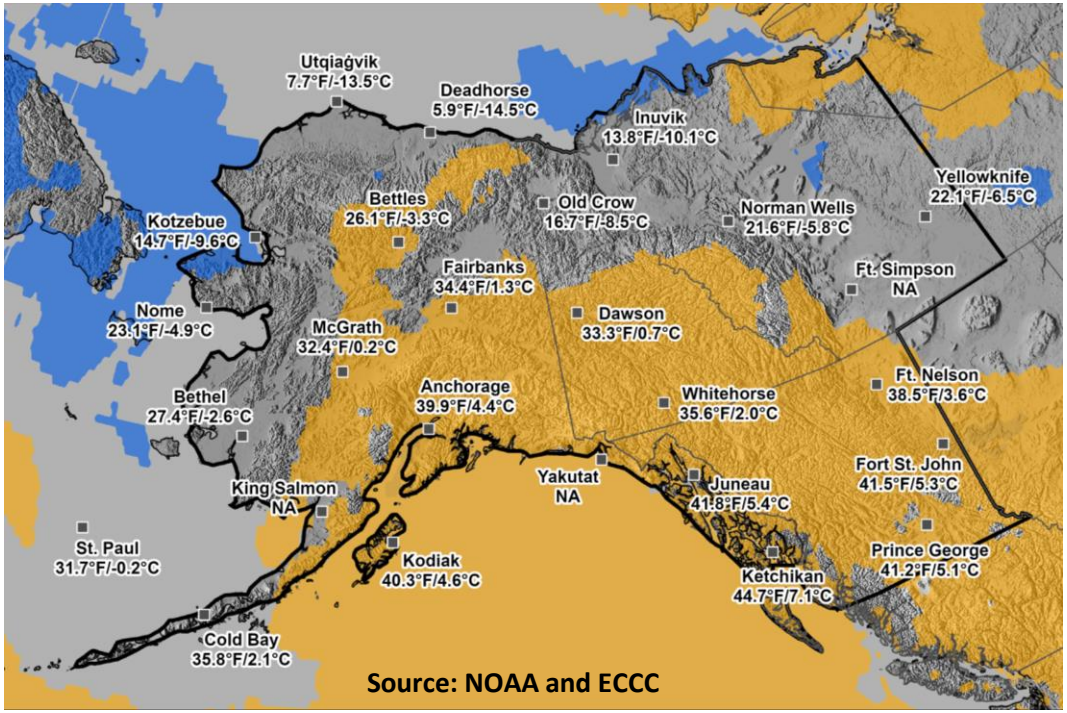
Weather and Climate Highlights and Impacts, March 2025 to May 2025
Climate Outlook, July 2025 to September 2025

ACCAP Alaska Center for Climate Assessment and Policy
A NOAA CAP/RISA Team

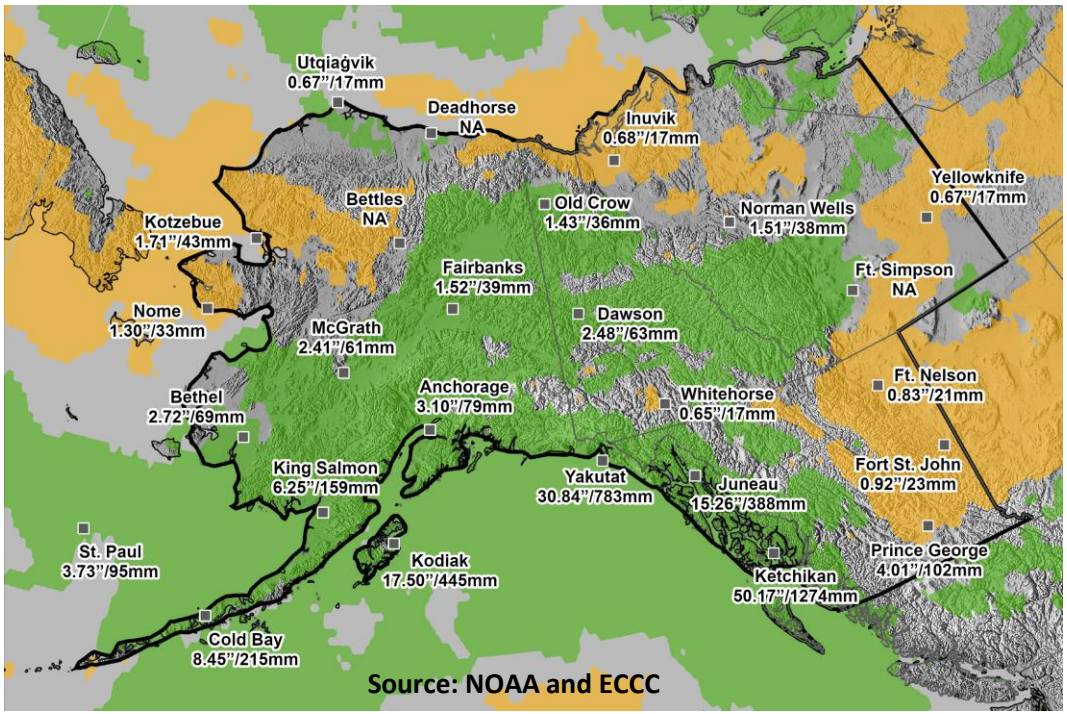
Environment and Climate Change Canada | Environnement et Changement climatique Canada



March to May 2025 Temp Averages (°F/°C) & Anomalies Below / Above / Normal



March to May Precipitation Totals (inches/mm) & Anomalies - Dry / Wet / Normal



Wet Spring for Southeast Alaska

Photo: Landslide cleanup in Metlakatla, Alaska, in May 2025.
Photo credit: Tim Bruno

Southeast Alaska is used to seeing heavy precipitation; it is a rainforest after all, the most northerly rainforest on Earth. No matter where they are, rainforests experience both droughts and flooding. Earlier in 2025, dry conditions were widespread in the region, but beginning around the 1st of April it began to rain and it didn't stop. The entire length of Southeast Alaska from Prince William Sound through Annette Island saw record to near record precipitation for the April through May 2025 period.

The wettest city in the United States with over 1000 people is Ketchikan, Alaska. It averages 143 in. (3632 mm) of precipitation annually. During April – May, it normally averages 20.04 in. (509 mm). In April – May 2025, Ketchikan recorded 38.02 in. (966 mm), shattering the record. The wettest climate station in Alaska is Little Port Walter, which normally averages 26.48 in. (673 mm) of precipitation during the April – May period. In April – May 2025, it recorded 60.53 in. (1537 mm), which is 32% greater than the previous record for this period (based on nearly 90 years of historical data). Other stations did not receive record-breaking precipitation amounts but did set records for frequency. In Juneau, measurable precipitation was recorded on 42 of 43 days during one very wet period. This is only the 4th such occurrence for Juneau and the only time outside of its usual "wet season".

Iditarod 2025 Route Change

Michele Phillips and her dog team, from 10 Mile, Yukon Territory, head out the Iditarod starting chute at Fairbanks, Alaska on March 3, 2025.
Photo credit: J. Perreault

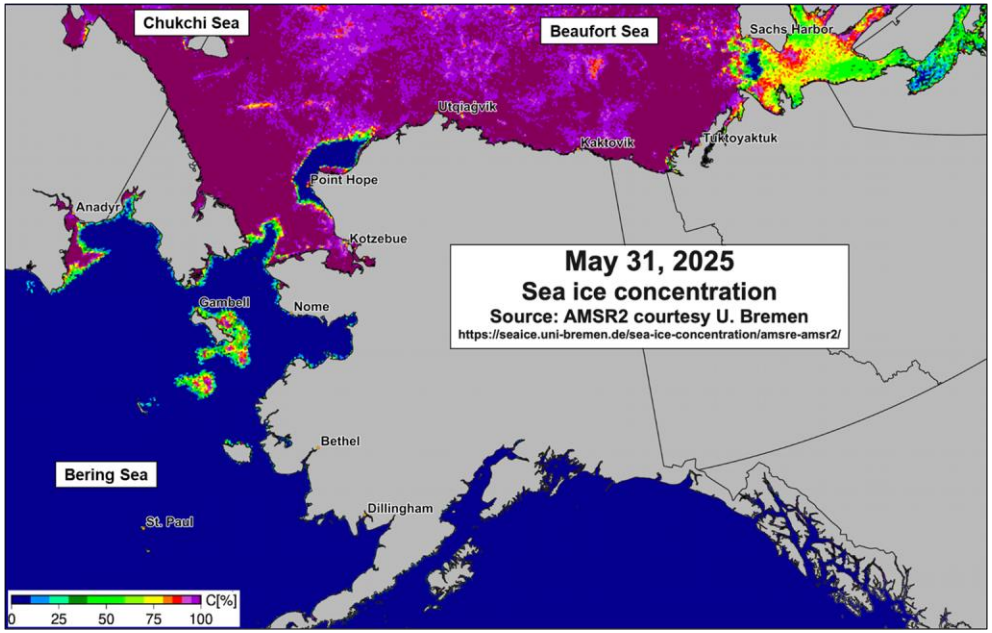
The Iditarod Sled Dog Race has been run every year since 1973, taking dog teams from the ceremonial start in Anchorage across a thousand miles (1600 km) of trail before finishing at Nome. In the past 11 years, the race route has had to be restarted from Fairbanks three times (also in 2003) due to poor snow conditions on some portions of trail in Southcentral Alaska or the Alaska Range. This year, February saw miles of snow-free trail south of Nikolai toward the Alaska Range, a result of low snowfall and frequent melting conditions during mid-winter. As a consequence, the 2025 Iditarod restart was again moved to Fairbanks, taking the trail westward along Tanana and the Yukon River before crossing to the Bering Sea coast at Unalakleet. There was plenty of snow along the rerouted trail, but daytime temperatures were above freezing almost every day before teams hit the coast, which impacted both the dogs and trail conditions. Colder weather prevailed on the Bering coast, with the usual winds and blowing snow in some areas, though not severe enough to slow down the leading teams. Jessie Holmes and his team were the first to the finish line on Front Street in Nome, arriving around 3 am AKDT on March 14, under clear skies, calm winds, and temperatures of -6°F (-21.1°C), making it the coldest finish for the Iditarod since 2009.

Late Ice Breakup: Porcupine River at Old Crow

Ice jammed Porcupine River and flooded Old Crow, May 24, 2025.
Photo Credit: Government of Yukon, 2025, with permission from Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation (VGFN), acknowledging VGFN's data sovereignty in their Traditional Territory. Any further use of this photo requires permission from VGFN.

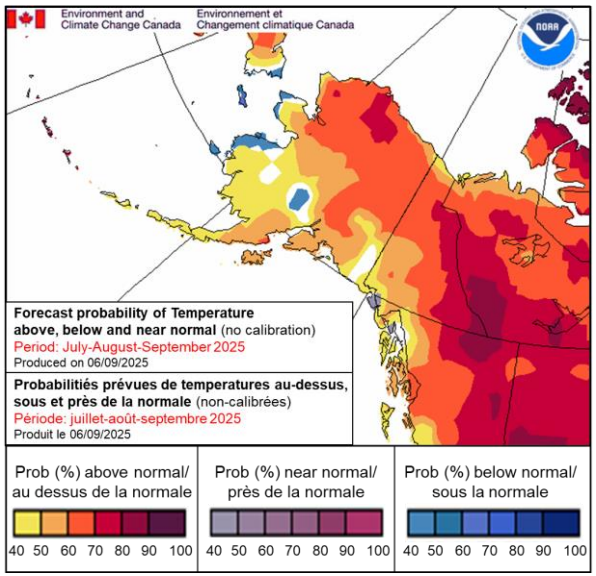
Old Crow experienced its latest ice breakup in over a decade, with ice on the Porcupine River jamming downstream of the town and flooding parts of the community on May 24. Although April started warm this spring, by mid-month cooler temperatures and cloudier than normal conditions resulted in delays in the spring snowmelt and ice breakup along the river. When conditions finally turned, rapid snowmelt and well-preserved ice cover led to the formation of an ice jam against intact ice downstream of town, resulting in a 25-km long ice jam stretching upstream of the town. While the jam was short-lived, the peak water level during this ice breakup event was the highest in the community since 1991. Residents near the river in southwest Old Crow were evacuated due to the rise in water levels and local flooding. The flooding also resulted in several other localized impacts, affecting the sewage lagoon, work campsites, roads, parts of the airport, and private properties. There were also concerns about potential contamination of local surface water from the flooded areas, which could pose risks to water quality in the area.

Sea Ice Concentration Conditions on May 31, 2025 in the Bering, Chukchi and Beaufort Seas

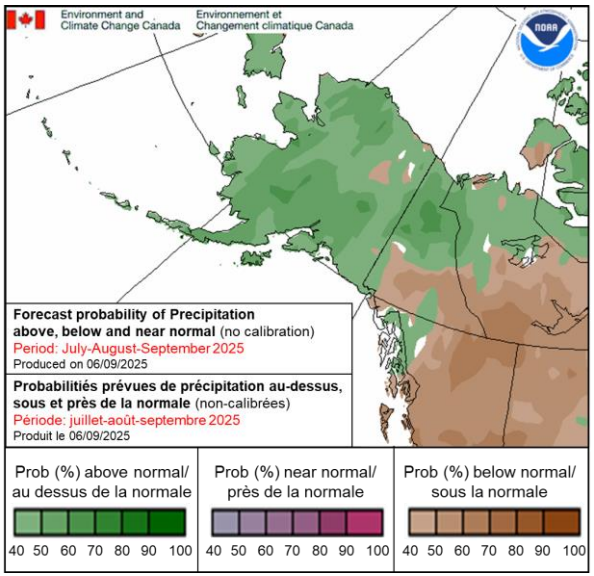


Sea ice conditions were unusual this spring across the region. The Bering Sea had a change in weather patterns, with sustained north winds in March and April that pushed ice south. Maximum ice extent was reached on March 26 and was the fourth lowest in the satellite era (since 1979). This was also the latest date that the maximum ice extent was reached since 2016. In the central Bering, however, ice continued to be pushed south into the first week of May. In the Chukchi Sea, a significant open lead was present for much of May off the western North Slope coast, but as of May 31 it had the lowest open water area in the sea for the end of the season since 1999. Lastly, the Beaufort Sea was scattered with atypical ice patterns. In the southern Beaufort, the leading ice edge was around 60 nautical miles farther south than normal. West of Banks Island, where there is normally first year ice adjacent to the consolidated ice edge, there was a mixture of first year and old ice. In northwestern Beaufort, areas typically covered by old ice were predominantly covered by first year ice, with only two-tenths old ice remaining, although this is becoming the new normal for the region. And in the Amundsen Gulf, consolidated ice was unusually extensive, reaching into the southeastern Beaufort and persisting into the spring, with ice melt delayed by about 2-3 weeks. While much of the Canadian Arctic experienced above normal temperature anomalies over the winter, parts of the Beaufort saw below normal anomalies this spring, contributing to the anomalous presence of consolidated ice and delayed melt.

Temperature Outlook: July to Sept 2025



Precipitation Outlook: July to Sept 2025



The temperature outlook map shows that much of Alaska and northwestern Canada have a signal for above average temperatures this summer, with probabilities ranging from 40% to 90% between July and September. The strongest signals are in southwestern Northwest Territories, northeastern BC, and parts of eastern Yukon and northern Alaska, with a signal exceeding 70% for above normal temperatures. The temperature outlook for the rest of the region is less certain.

The precipitation outlook suggests probabilities of above normal precipitation in the western and northern portions of the region, while below normal precipitation is forecasted farther south and east. All of Alaska, as well as the northern portions of northwest Canada, have between a 40 to 70% chance of above normal precipitation. Meanwhile, the remaining parts of northwest Canada have a 40 to 70% probability for below normal precipitation amounts.

Content and graphics prepared by NOAA's National Weather Service and National Center for Environmental Information; the Alaska Center for Climate Assessment and Policy at the University of Alaska; and Environment and Climate Change Canada, as well as our regional partners: Alaska Climate Research Center, Alaska Climate Science Center, National Snow and Ice Data Center, and Scenarios Network for Alaska + Arctic Planning.

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